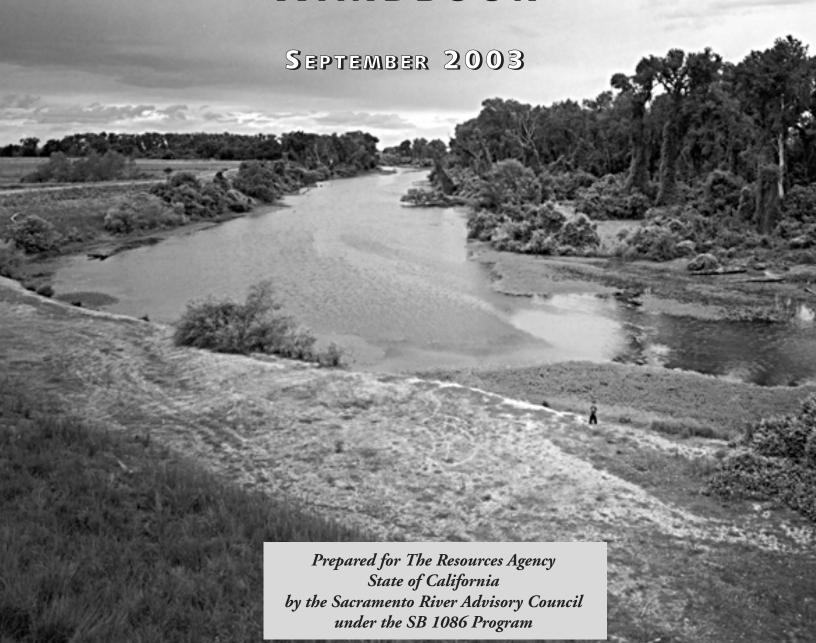
### SB 1086

# SACRAMENTO RIVER CONSERVATION AREA FORUM HANDBOOK



## Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum Handbook

#### 2003

Prepared for The Resources Agency
State of California
by the Sacramento River Advisory Council
under Senate Bill 1086
authored by Senator Jim Nielsen

Revised and updated by the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum September 2003

Dedicated to Bob Bosworth, who has grown up and worked along the Sacramento River his entire life. Bob is a strong advocate of balancing the needs of agriculture and wildlife habitat for the benefit of future generations.

This Handbook is a "living document." As conditions change and our understanding of the river system increases, periodic updates may be made. Substantive changes will be made following an established amendment procedure. If you have comments, corrections, or suggestions, please contact:

Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum 2440 Main Street Red Bluff, CA 96080 (530) 528-7411

To view the most current version of the Handbook, please log on our website at: www.sacramentoriver.ca.gov.

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#### **Foreword**

Passed by the State Legislature in 1986, Senate Bill 1086 called for a management plan for the Sacramento River and its tributaries that would protect, restore, and enhance both fisheries and riparian habitat. The law established an Advisory Council, composed of representatives of state and federal agencies, county supervisors, and representatives of landowner, water contractor, commercial and sport fisheries, and general wildlife and conservation interests.

After more than 50 lengthy meetings and workshops, the Council and its action teams developed a plan which included a specific and action-oriented fisheries plan and a more conceptual riparian habitat plan. This plan, the Upper Sacramento River Fisheries and Riparian Habitat Management Plan (1989 Plan), was published in 1989. Many of the fisheries action items have since been, or are currently being, implemented, such as fish bypass structures at diversions on Sacramento River tributaries and the Shasta Dam temperature control structure.

The Riparian Habitat Committee of the Advisory Council, an informal and consensus-based planning group that included landowner representatives, environmental group leaders, and agency personnel, continued the work of on-the-ground implementation. The Advisory Council was reconvened by the Secretary of Resources in 1993 to "complete its earlier work concerning riparian habitat protection and management, including the development of a specific implementation program."

The committee developed this Handbook to guide an implementation program for riparian habitat management along the Sacramento River, and worked to ensure that this Handbook addresses both the dynamics of riparian ecosystems as well as the realities of local agricultural issues. It did this by developing a set of guiding principles and planning tools that should govern riparian habitat management along the river.

The six principles fall into the categories of:

- \*Ecosystem management
- \*Local concerns
- \*Flood management
- \*Bank protection
- \*Voluntary participation
- \*Information and education

A Memorandum of Agreement between local, state, and federal agencies has been signed by most of the key agencies and all of the named counties that formally adopts the Handbook and commits support for the formation of a locally based nonprofit organization to coordinate activities along the river. In May 2000, the Sacramento River Conservation Area (SRCA), a nonprofit, public benefit corporation was formed. The SRCA is governed by a Board of Directors that includes both private landowner and public interest representatives from each of the seven involved counties, an appointee of the Resources Agency, as well as ex-officio members from six state and federal resource agencies. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), composed of experts from relevant disciplines, as well as landowners, has been established to advise the SRCA Board on issues related to river management and site-specific planning. Committee members include agency and academic scientists as well as stakeholders. Much of the work of the organization focuses along an area within the inner river zone guideline, where flooding and channel movement are present, primarily between Red Bluff and Colusa. Whether a particular parcel or property is within the inner river zone will be determined on a case-by-case basis, using voluntary participation, erosion and accretion projections, and flood frequency as criteria. If all landowners within the potential inner river zone choose to participate, the area could include about 50,000 acres between Red Bluff and Colusa.

The MOA, Handbook, and Sacramento River Conservation Area represent a new type of sustainable river corridor management in which all stakeholders, including local, state, and federal agencies, public interest groups and landowners are closely involved in the planning and decision making process and implementation of river related activities. Restoration efforts, as well as flood control, water supply and other activities, benefit from the open dialogue fostered through the forum provided by the Sacramento River Conservation Area planning process.

The descriptive and scientific portions of this Handbook (Chapters 2–6) are based upon current knowledge. As our understanding of the Sacramento River system improves over time, these chapters are periodically amended. Similarly, the portions of the Handbook (Chapters 1, 7, 8 and 9) dealing with institutions and policies also become outdated as circumstances change. Therefore, the SRCA Board will, from time to time, adopt revisions to this Handbook. In 2001, the SRCA Board addressed two areas of concern in the Handbook that were not completed prior to the printing of the Handbook, and were listed in the "Issues to be Resolved" section. Through the TAC, and with help from an ad hoc committee that had worked on these issues under the Riparian Habitat Committee, recommendations to formally adopt acceptable language were agreed with and forwarded to the SRCA Board. The Board also worked through the TAC to define the Inner River Zone Guidelines for Reaches 1, 3, and 4 that had not been defined in the January 2000 edition.

In 2002, the Board amended the Handbook to re-define the outer boundary of the Conservation Area. Below Tehama County, the outer boundary is the same as defined for the Inner River Zone Guidelines. The Board also made it clear that any related activity outside of the IRZ would be addressed by the SRCA. In 2003, an amendment was adopted that revised language in a section of Chapter 6. All of the changes to text and acreages as a result of the amendments have been incorporated in the 2003 edition of the Handbook. Although not a Handbook change, but noteworthy, was direction from the Board to change its name to the Sacramento River Conservation Area *Forum*. Members of the Board felt that by adding "*Forum*" to the name, it better described the role of the organization. Chapter 1 describes the guiding principles and planning tools that the SRCAF organization uses. Chapter 2 describes the Sacramento River ecosystem and how it relates to riparian habitat.

This chapter also includes a complete description of the inner river zone guidelines. Chapters 3 through 6 discuss the river ecosystem in more detail within the four broad river reaches of the Conservation Area. The restoration priorities and inner river zone guidelines are then applied to each reach. Chapter 7 describes existing riparian habitat management programs along the river. Chapter 8 describes those government agencies and private organizations that the nonprofit management entity works with most closely in conducting riparian habitat management activities. Chapter 9 describes the recommended actions to be carried out on the ground. A series of appendices on topics useful to the nonprofit management entity is also included.

#### The SB1086 Advisory Council - 2002

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The Technical Advisory Committee, composed of scientists from relevant disciplines, has been established to advise the SRCA on issues related to river management and site specific planning. Team members include agency and academic scientists as well as private individuals. Representatives from the following agencies and/or organizations have attended the TAC meetings:

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Department of Water Resources Sacramento River Partners

Sacramento River Water Contractors National Marine Fisheries Service Wildlife Conservation Board

Department of Parks and Recreation

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service State Reclamation Board CALFED Bay-Delta Program U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Bureau of Land Management

Northern California Water Association

The Nature Conservancy

Sacramento River Preservation Trust

Senator Maurice Johannessen Family Water Alliance

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Sacramento Valley Landowners Association Hamilton City Community Services Dist Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Butte County Colusa County Glenn County Shasta County Sutter County Tehama County Yolo County

Glenn-Colusa Irrigation Dist.

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